

**SWEET MONTOUR SCHOOL, PWS # 3230021
SOURCE WATER ASSESSMENT REPORT**

DATE: December 13, 2000



**State of Idaho
Department of Environmental Quality**

Disclaimer: This publication has been developed as part of an informational service for the source water assessments of public water systems in Idaho and is based on the data available at the time and the professional judgement of the staff. Although reasonable efforts have been made to present accurate information, no guarantees, including expressed or implied warranties of any kind, are made with respect to this publication by the state of Idaho or any of its agencies, employees, or agents, who also assume no legal responsibility for the accuracy of presentations, comments, or other information in this publication. The assessment is subject to modification if new data is produced.

Executive Summary

Under the Safe Drinking Water Act Amendments of 1996, all states are required by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency to assess every source of public drinking water for its relative sensitivity to contaminants regulated by the act. This assessment is based on a land use inventory of the designated assessment area, sensitivity factors associated with the wells, and aquifer characteristics.

This report, *Source Water Assessment for the Sweet Montour School*, describes the public drinking water system, the boundaries of the zones of water contribution, and the associated potential contaminant sources located within these boundaries. This assessment should be used as a planning tool, taken into account with local knowledge and concerns, to develop and implement appropriate protection measures for this source.

The results should not be used as an absolute measure of risk and they should not be used to undermine public confidence in the water system.

The Sweet Montour School drinking water system consists of one well. The well exceeded drinking water maximum contaminant levels for inorganic chemical contamination (fluoride) in 1995. The incident was for two reporting periods in that year, but the system has subsequently altered treatment procedure and detections have not occurred since that time.

This assessment should be used as a basis for determining appropriate new protection measures or re-evaluating existing protection efforts. No matter what ranking a source receives, protection is always important. Whether the source is currently located in a “pristine” area or an area with numerous industrial and/or agricultural land uses that require education and surveillance, the way to ensure good water quality in the future is to act now to protect valuable water supply resources.

For the Sweet Montour School, source water protection activities should focus on environmental education with the recreational users, residents and with parties engaged in activities that may affect water quality within the vicinity of the Squaw Creek drainage. Most of the designated areas are outside the direct jurisdiction of the Sweet Montour School. Partnerships with state and local agencies and industry groups should be established and are critical to success. Due to the time involved with the movement of ground water, source water protection activities should be aimed at long-term management strategies even though these strategies may not yield results in the near term. Source water protection activities for agriculture should be coordinated with the Idaho State Department of Agriculture, the Soil Conservation Commission and Gem Soil Conservation District, the Natural Resources Conservation Service and other agencies.

A community with a fully-developed source water protection program will incorporate many strategies. For assistance in developing protection strategies, please contact your regional Idaho Department of Environmental Quality office or the Idaho Rural Water Association.

SOURCE WATER ASSESSMENT FOR SWEET MONTOUR SCHOOL

Section 1. Introduction - Basis for Assessment

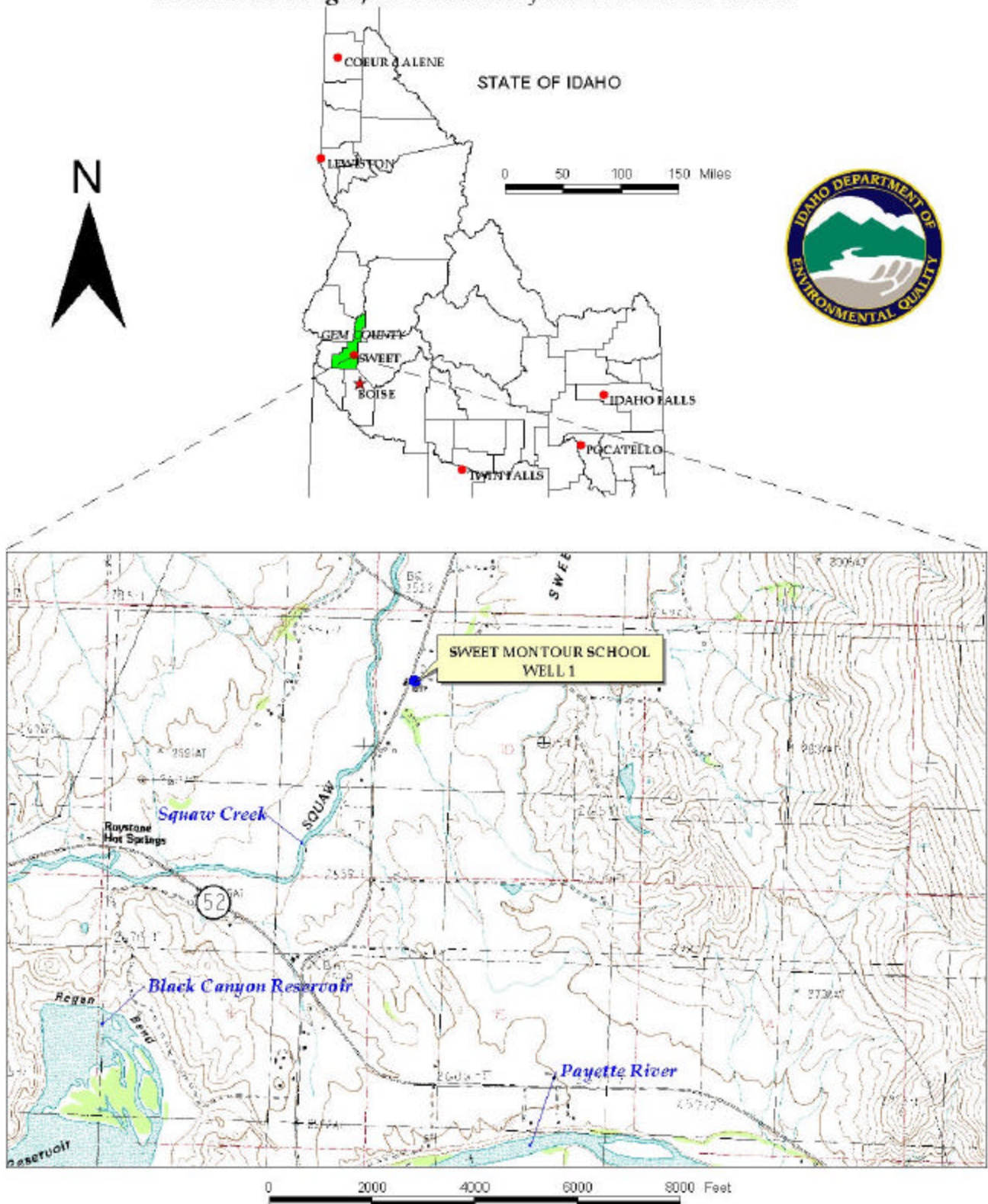
The following sections contain information necessary to understand how and why this assessment was conducted. **It is important to review this information to understand what the ranking of this source means.** A map showing the delineated source water assessment area and the inventory of significant potential sources of contamination identified within that area are attached. The list of significant potential contaminant source categories and their rankings, used to develop this assessment, is also attached.

Level of Accuracy and Purpose of the Assessment

The Idaho Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) is required by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to assess the over 2,900 public drinking water sources in Idaho for their relative susceptibility to contaminants regulated by the Safe Drinking Water Act. This assessment is based on a land use inventory of the delineated assessment area, sensitivity factors associated with the wells, and aquifer characteristics. All assessments must be completed by May of 2003. The resources and time available to accomplish assessments are limited. Therefore, an in-depth, site-specific investigation to identify each significant potential source of contamination for every public water system is not possible. **This assessment should be used as a planning tool, taken into account with local knowledge and concerns, to develop and implement appropriate protection measures for this source. The results should not be used as an absolute measure of risk and they should not be used to undermine public confidence in the water system.**

The ultimate goal of this assessment is to provide data to local communities to develop a protection strategy for their drinking water supply system. The Idaho Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) recognizes that pollution prevention activities generally require less time and money to implement than treating a public water supply system once it has been contaminated. DEQ encourages communities to balance resource protection with economic growth and development. The decision as to the amount and types of information necessary to develop a source water protection program should be determined by the local community based on its own needs and limitations. Wellhead or source water protection is one facet of a comprehensive growth plan, and it can complement ongoing local planning efforts.

FIGURE 1. Geographic Location of Sweet Montour School



Section 2. Conducting the Assessment

General Description of the Source Water Quality

The Sweet Montour School serves a population of approximately 80 people, and is located approximately 14 miles east of Emmett, Idaho and north of State Highway 52 and Black Canyon Reservoir (Figure 1). The community of Sweet is to the north in the Squaw Creek drainage. The public drinking water system is comprised of one well with an average production rate of 20,000 gallons per day.

The primary water quality issue currently facing the Sweet Montour School is that of high levels of inorganic chemical contamination and the problems associated with managing this contamination. The drinking water system has experienced water quality problems related to fluoride detections that exceeded the maximum contaminant level. The system has subsequently revised a treatment procedure and the levels have not been detected above maximum contaminant levels since.

Defining the Zones of Contribution - Delineation

The delineation process establishes the physical area around a well that will become the focal point of the assessment. The process includes mapping the boundaries of the zone of contribution into time of travel zones (zones indicating the number of years necessary for a particle of water to reach a well) for water in the aquifer. DEQ used a refined computer model approved by the EPA in determining the three-year (Zone 1B), six-year (Zone 2), and ten-year (Zone 3) time-of-travel (TOT) for water associated with the Payette Valley hydrogeologic unit in the vicinity of the Sweet Montour School. The outer boundaries of the zones represent the distance it takes water to travel to a specific well within a specific time period. For example, contaminated water at the outer 3-year time of travel boundary would take 3 years to travel to the well. The computer model used site-specific data, assimilated by DEQ from a variety of sources including the school and other local well logs. The delineated source water assessment area for the Sweet Montour School can best be described as an elongated area, approximately 1/4 mile wide, 3/4 mile long that extends from the well north to the community of Sweet (Figure 2). The actual data used by DEQ to determine the source water assessment delineation area is available upon request.

Identifying Potential Sources of Contamination

A potential source of contamination is defined as any facility or activity that stores, uses, or produces, as a product or by-product, the contaminants regulated under the Safe Drinking Water Act and has a sufficient likelihood of releasing such contaminants at levels that could pose a concern relative to drinking water sources. The goal of the inventory process is to locate and describe those facilities, land uses, and environmental conditions that are potential sources of ground water contamination. The locations of potential sources of contamination within the delineation areas were obtained by field surveys conducted by DEQ and from available databases.

The land use is irrigated agriculture in the vicinity of the Sweet Montour School, including the delineated source water area. The area is in the Squaw Creek drainage and consists of rural homes/small ranches that operate with septic systems.

It is important to understand that a release may never occur from a potential source of contamination provided best management practices are used. Many potential sources of contamination are regulated at the federal level, state level, or both to reduce the risk of release. Therefore, when a business, facility, or property is identified as a potential contaminant source, this should not be interpreted to mean that this business, facility, or property is in violation of any local, state, or federal environmental law or regulation. What it does mean is that the potential for contamination exists due to the nature of the business, industry, or operation. There are a number of methods that water systems can use to work cooperatively with potential sources of contamination, such as educational visits and inspections of stored materials. Many owners of such facilities may not even be aware that they are located near a public water supply well.

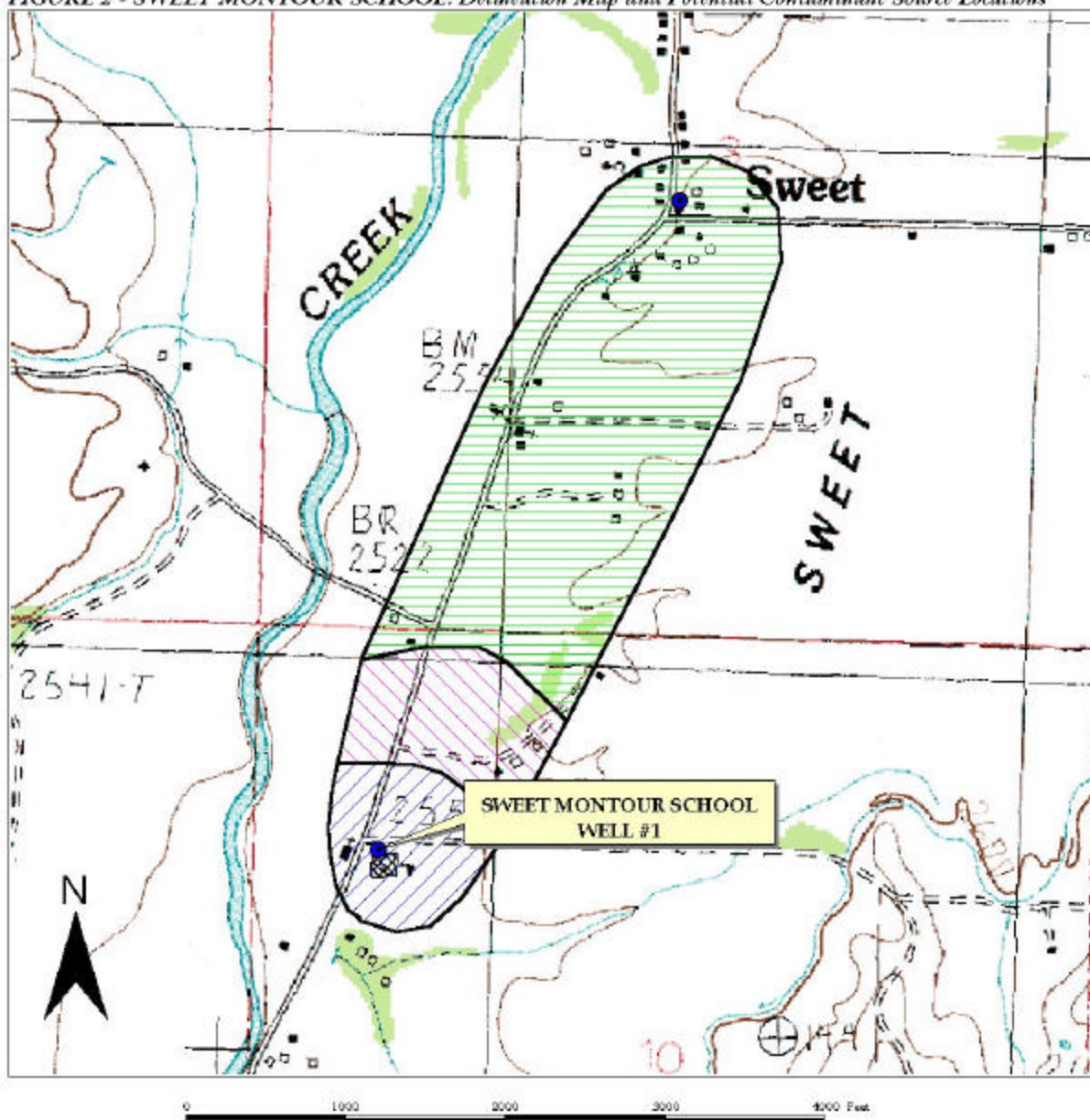
Contaminant Source Inventory Process

A contaminant inventory of the study area was conducted during September, 2000. This involved identifying and documenting potential contaminant sources within the Sweet Montour School Source Water Assessment Area through the use of computer databases and Geographic Information System (GIS) maps developed by DEQ.

No potential contaminant sources were located within the delineated source water area (Table 1).

Contaminants of concern are primarily related to inorganic chemicals, namely fluoride. Fluoride is a naturally occurring trace element that may be associated with geologic conditions. Fluoride is beneficial for dental health in low concentrations but in high concentrations above maximum contaminant level (MCL) of 4.0 mg/l health problems can occur.

FIGURE 2 - SWEET MONTOUR SCHOOL: Delineation Map and Potential Contaminant Source Locations



PWS# 3020021
WELL #1

Table 1. Sweet Montour School Potential Contaminant Inventory

SITE #	Source Description ¹	TOT Zone ² (years)	Source of Information	Potential Contaminants ³
NONE				

² TOT = time of travel (in years) for a potential contaminant to reach the wellhead

³ IOC = inorganic chemical, VOC = volatile organic chemical, SOC = synthetic organic chemical

Section 3. Susceptibility Analyses

The susceptibility of the well to contamination was ranked as high, moderate, or low risk according to the following considerations: hydrologic characteristics, physical integrity of the well, land use characteristics, and potentially significant contaminant sources. The susceptibility rankings are specific to a particular potential contaminant or category of contaminants. Therefore, a high susceptibility rating relative to one potential contaminant does not mean that the water system is at the same risk for all other potential contaminants. The relative ranking that is derived for each well is a qualitative, screening-level step that, in many cases, uses generalized assumptions and best professional judgement. The following summaries describe the rationale for the susceptibility ranking.

Hydrologic Sensitivity

Hydrologic sensitivity was low for Sweet Montour School well (Table 2). This is reflected in that the system is drawing water from a deeper aquifer that is assumed to be in the Columbia River Basalt sequence, below a clay sequence. The clay layer protects the lower aquifer from the vertical migration of contaminants generated from surface activities.

Well Construction

Well construction directly affects the ability of the wells to protect the aquifer from contaminants. Lower scores imply a system that can better protect the water. The Sweet Montour School drinking water system consists of one well that extracts ground water for domestic. The well system construction score was low.

The well at the Sweet Montour School is constructed to 350 feet below ground surface (Table 2). It is cased to a depth of 127 feet below surface into what is assumed to be a unit of the Columbia River Basalt flow.

The Idaho Department of Water Resources (IDWR) *Well Construction Standards Rules (1993)* require all public water systems (PWSs) follow DEQ standards as well. IDAPA 58.01.08.550 requires that PWSs follow the *Recommended Standards for Water Works (1997)* during construction. Various aspects of the standards can be assessed from well logs. Table 1 of the *Recommended Standards for Water Works (1997)* states that 8-inch diameter steel casing requires a thickness of 0.322 inches. The Sweet Montour School well uses a 0.250-inch thick 8-inch diameter steel casing. The casing extends to a depth of 127 feet below surface, into a clay layer of low permeability and then into basalt sequence. The well has a surface seal that extends to a depth of 18 feet below land surface.

Table 2. Selected Construction Characteristics of Sweet Montour School Well

Well #	Total Depth (ft.)	Screened Interval (ft. below ground surface)	Screen Below Blue Clay?	Gravel Pack Interval (ft.)
1	350	CASING 1-127	OPEN	NONE

Potential Contaminant Source and Land Use

The Sweet Montour School well rated in the low category in susceptibility for the inorganic chemical class, volatile and synthetic organic chemicals, and for microbial contaminants.

The land use within the delineated area is predominantly irrigated agriculture. From a database analysis, the area has a moderate nitrogen fertilizer usage and a low herbicide usage.

Final Susceptibility Ranking

In terms of the total susceptibility score, it can be seen from Table 3 that the Sweet Montour School well shows a low susceptibility rating for volatile organic and synthetic organic chemicals, and microbial contaminants. The system rated moderate in susceptibility to inorganic chemicals, with the score based on the land use of irrigated agriculture and possible nitrate loading. It should be noted that the system did encounter high concentrations of an inorganic chemical (fluoride) in 1995, but the system has altered the treatment process and the problem has not recurred.

Table 3. Summary of Sweet Montour School Susceptibility Evaluation

Well	Susceptibility Scores ¹									
	Hydrologic Sensitivity	Contaminant Inventory				System Construction	Final Susceptibility Ranking			
		IOC	VOC	SOC	Microbials		IOC	VOC	SOC	Microbials
1	L	M	L	L	L	L	M	L	L	L

¹H = High Susceptibility, M = Moderate Susceptibility, L = Low Susceptibility

IOC = inorganic chemical, VOC = volatile organic chemical, SOC = synthetic organic chemical

²H* - Indicates source automatically scored as high susceptibility due to presence of either a VOC, SOC or an IOC above the maximum contaminant level in the tested drinking water

Susceptibility Summary

The Sweet Montour School drinking water system is not threatened by any contaminants at the present time. Past detections of fluoride have exceeded maximum contaminant levels of the Safe Drinking Water Act, however treatment has avoided detections in the past several years. The fluoride is naturally occurring, however at high levels can cause health problems; therefore, treatment is necessary.

The well in the Sweet Montour School system takes water from a deep, semi-confined aquifer that offers some protection from contamination related surface activities.

Section 4. Options for Source Water Protection

The susceptibility assessment should be used as a basis for determining appropriate new protection measures or re-evaluating existing protection efforts. No matter what the susceptibility ranking a source receives, protection is always important. Whether the source is currently located in a “pristine” area or an area with numerous industrial and/or agricultural land uses that require education and surveillance, the way to ensure good water quality in the future is to act now to protect valuable water supply resources.

An effective source water protection program is tailored to the particular local source water protection area. A community with a fully-developed source water protection program will incorporate many strategies. For the Sweet Montour School, source water protection activities should focus on environmental education with the recreational users, residents and with parties engaged in activities that may affect water quality within the vicinity of the Squaw Creek drainage. Even though the well is completed in the lower aquifer, protection within the drainage itself will be of benefit to all users in the area. Most of the delineated areas are outside the direct jurisdiction of the Sweet Montour School. Partnerships with state and local agricultural agencies and industry groups should be established and are critical to success. Due to the time involved with the movement of ground water, wellhead protection activities should be aimed at long-term management strategies even though these strategies may not yield results in the near term. Source water protection activities can be coordinated with the Idaho Department of Agriculture, the Idaho Department of Lands, the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation, the communities of Sweet and Ola, and other federal, state and local agencies.

Assistance

Public water supplies and others may call the following IDEQ offices with questions about this assessment and to request assistance with developing and implementing a local protection plan. In addition, draft protection plans may be submitted to the IDEQ office for preliminary review and comments.

Boise Regional IDEQ Office (208) 373-0550

State IDEQ Office (208) 373-0502

Website: <http://www2.state.id.us/deq>

Water suppliers serving fewer than 10,000 persons may contact John Bokor, Idaho Rural Water Association, at 1-800-962-3257 for assistance with wellhead protection strategies.

References Cited

Great Lakes-Upper Mississippi River Board of State and Provincial Public Health and Environmental Managers, 1997. "Recommended Standards for Water Works."

Idaho Department of Agriculture, 1998. Unpublished Data.

Idaho Division of Environmental Quality, 1994. Ground Water and Soils Reconnaissance of the Lower Payette Area, Payette County, Idaho. Ground Water Quality Technical Report No. 5. Idaho Division of Environmental Quality. December 1994.

Idaho Division of Environmental Quality, 1996. Lower Payette River Agriculture Irrigation Water Return Study and Ground Water Evaluation, Payette County, Idaho. Water Quality Status Report No. 115.

Idaho Department of Environmental Quality, 1997. Design Standards for Public Drinking Water Systems. IDAPA 58.01.08.550.01.

Idaho Department of Environmental Quality, 2000. City of Fruitland Wellhead Viability Project 319 Grant Final Report July 2000.

Idaho Department of Water Resources, 1993. Administrative Rules of the Idaho Water Resource Board: Well Construction Standards Rules. IDAPA 37.03.09.

Natural Resources Conservation Service, 1991. Idaho Snake-Payette Rivers Hydrologic Unit Plan of Work. March 1991.

United States Geological Survey, 1986. Quality of Ground Water in the Payette River Basin, Idaho. United States Geological Survey. Water Resources Investigation Report 86-4013.

University of Idaho. 1986. Ground Water Resources in a Portion of Payette County, Idaho. Idaho Water Resources Research Institute. University of Idaho. Moscow, Idaho. April 1986.

Attachment A

Sweet Montour School Susceptibility Analysis Worksheet

The final scores for the susceptibility analysis were determined using the following formulas:

- 1) VOC/SOC/IOC Final Score = Hydrologic Sensitivity + System Construction + (Potential Contaminant/Land Use x 0.2)
- 2) 2) Microbial Final Score = Hydrologic Sensitivity + System Construction + (Potential Contaminant/Land Use x 0.35)

Final Susceptibility Scoring:

0 - 5 Low Susceptibility

6 - 12 Moderate Susceptibility

> 13 High Susceptibility

1. System Construction

SCORE

Drill Date	10/21/75	
Driller Log Available	YES	
Sanitary Survey (if yes, indicate date of last survey)	YES	1995
Well meets IDWR construction standards	NO	1
Wellhead and surface seal maintained	YES	0
Casing and annular seal extend to low permeability unit	YES	0
Highest production 100 feet below static water level	YES	0
Well located outside the 100 year flood plain	YES	0

Total System Construction Score 1

2. Hydrologic Sensitivity

Soils are poorly to moderately drained	YES	0
Vadose zone composed of gravel, fractured rock or unknown	YES	1
Depth to first water > 300 feet	NO	1
Aquitard present with > 50 feet cumulative thickness	YES	0

Total Hydrologic Score 2

3. Potential Contaminant / Land Use - ZONE 1A

IOC Score	VOC Score	SOC Score	Microbial Score
--------------	--------------	--------------	--------------------

Land Use Zone 1A	IRRIGATED CROPLAND	2	2	2	2
Farm chemical use high	NO	0	0	0	
IOC, VOC, SOC, or Microbial sources in Zone 1A	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO
Total Potential Contaminant Source/Land Use Score - Zone 1A		2	2	2	2

Potential Contaminant / Land Use - ZONE 1B

Contaminant sources present (Number of Sources)	NO	0	0	0	0
(Score = # Sources X 2) 8 Points Maximum		0	0	0	0
Sources of Class II or III leacheable contaminants or	YES	4	0	0	
4 Points Maximum		4	0	0	
Zone 1B contains or intercepts a Group 1 Area	NO	0	0	0	0
Land use Zone 1B	Greater Than 50% Irrigated Agricultural Land	4	4	4	4

Total Potential Contaminant Source / Land Use Score - Zone 1B 8 4 4 4

Potential Contaminant / Land Use - ZONE II

Contaminant Sources Present	NO	0	0	0	
Sources of Class II or III leacheable contaminants or	YES	1	0	0	
Land Use Zone II	Greater Than 50% Irrigated Agricultural Land	2	2	2	

Potential Contaminant Source / Land Use Score - Zone II 3 2 2 0

Potential Contaminant / Land Use - ZONE III

Contaminant Source Present	NO	0	0	0	
Sources of Class II or III leacheable contaminants or	YES	1	0	0	
Is there irrigated agricultural lands that occupy > 50% of	YES	1	1	1	

Total Potential Contaminant Source / Land Use Score - Zone III		2	1	1	0
Cumulative Potential Contaminant / Land Use Score		15	9	9	6
4. Final Susceptibility Source Score		6	5	5	5
5. Final Well Ranking		Moderate	Low	Low	Low

POTENTIAL CONTAMINANT INVENTORY

LIST OF ACRONYMS AND DEFINITIONS

AST (Aboveground Storage Tanks) – Sites with aboveground storage tanks.

Business Mailing List – This list contains potential contaminant sites identified through a yellow pages database search of standard industry codes (SIC).

CERCLIS – This includes sites considered for listing under the **Comprehensive Environmental Response Compensation and Liability Act (CERCLA)**. CERCLA, more commonly known as ASuperfund, is designed to clean up hazardous waste sites that are on the national priority list (NPL).

Cyanide Site – DEQ permitted and known historical sites/facilities using cyanide.

Dairy – Sites included in the primary contaminant source inventory represent those facilities regulated by Idaho State Department of Agriculture (ISDA) and may range from a few head to several thousand head of milking cows.

Deep Injection Well – Injection wells regulated under the Idaho Department of Water Resources generally for the disposal of stormwater runoff or agricultural field drainage.

Enhanced Inventory – Enhanced inventory locations are potential contaminant source sites added by the water system. These can include new sites not captured during the primary contaminant inventory, or corrected locations for sites not properly located during the primary contaminant inventory. Enhanced inventory sites can also include miscellaneous sites added by the Idaho Department of Environmental Quality (IDEQ) during the primary contaminant inventory.

Floodplain – This is a coverage of the 100year floodplains.

Group 1 Sites – These are sites that show elevated levels of contaminants and are not within the priority one areas.

Inorganic Priority Area – Priority one areas where greater than 25% of the wells/springs show constituents higher than primary standards or other health standards.

Landfill – Areas of open and closed municipal and non-municipal landfills.

LUST (Leaking Underground Storage Tank) – Potential contaminant source sites associated with leaking underground storage tanks as regulated under RCRA.

Mines and Quarries – Mines and quarries permitted through the Idaho Department of Lands.)

Nitrate Priority Area – Area where greater than 25% of wells/springs show nitrate values above 5mg/l.

NPDES (National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System)

– Sites with NPDES permits. The Clean Water Act requires that any discharge of a pollutant to waters of the United States from a point source must be authorized by an NPDES permit.

Organic Priority Areas – These are any areas where greater than 25 % of wells/springs show levels greater than 1% of the primary standard or other health standards.

Recharge Point – This includes active, proposed, and possible recharge sites on the Snake River Plain.

RICRIS – Site regulated under **Resource Conservation Recovery Act (RCRA)**. RCRA is commonly associated with the cradle to grave management approach for generation, storage, and disposal of hazardous wastes.

SARA Tier II (Superfund Amendments and Reauthorization Act Tier II Facilities) – These sites store certain types and amounts of hazardous materials and must be identified under the Community Right to Know Act.

Toxic Release Inventory (TRI) – The toxic release inventory list was developed as part of the Emergency Planning and Community Right to Know (Community Right to Know) Act passed in 1986. The Community Right to Know Act requires the reporting of any release of a chemical found on the TRI list.

UST (Underground Storage Tank) – Potential contaminant source sites associated with underground storage tanks regulated as regulated under RCRA.

Wastewater Land Applications Sites – These are areas where the land application of municipal or industrial wastewater is permitted by IDEQ.

Wellheads – These are drinking water well locations regulated under the Safe Drinking Water Act. They are not treated as potential contaminant sources.

NOTE: Many of the potential contaminant sources were located using a geocoding program where mailing addresses are used to locate a facility. Field verification of potential contaminant sources is an important element of an enhanced inventory.

Where possible, a list of potential contaminant sites unable to be located with geocoding will be provided to water systems to determine if the potential contaminant sources are located within the source water assessment area.